

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method of using a porous shaped article to apply at least one skeleton-forming agent to an external skin and/or hair surface of a human or an animal, the method comprising:

- step (a) providing a molded, freeze-dried, porous shaped article having a volume of from approximately 0.1 cm^3 to approximately 6 cm^3 and a diameter of from approximately 3 mm to approximately 60 mm, wherein said shaped article comprises the at least one skeleton-forming agent but does not contain any protein-based skeleton-forming agents;
- step (b) contacting the shaped article with an aqueous solution comprising water to form a solution or a gel; and
- step (c) applying the solution or the gel formed in the contacting step to the external skin and/or hair surface of the human or the animal.

Claims 2 - 3 (cancel)

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the skeleton-forming agent is at least one polysaccharide or a derivative thereof.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the skeleton-forming agent is sodium alginate.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the porous shaped article exhibits a geometrical shape of a sphere prior to the contacting step.

Claims 7-9 (cancel)

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein in step (b), the aqueous solution further comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of active substances and auxiliary substances.

Claims 11-14 (cancel)

Claim 15 (previously presented): The method according to claim 10, wherein the aqueous solution comprises one or more active substances selected from the group consisting of cosmetic active substances and pharmaceutical active substances.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method according to claim 10, wherein the aqueous solution comprises one or more auxiliary substances selected from the group consisting of washing surfactants, dispersing agents, emulsifiers, fillers, pH-adjusting agents, buffering substances, stabilisers, co-solvents, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional dyestuffs, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional pigments, preservatives, plasticizers, lubricants and slip additives.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the porous shaped article further comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of active substances and auxiliary substances.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The method according to claim 17, wherein the porous shaped article comprises one or more active substances selected from the group consisting of cosmetic active substances and pharmaceutical active substances.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method according to claim 17, wherein the porous shaped article comprises one or more auxiliary substances selected from the group consisting of washing surfactants, dispersing agents, emulsifiers, fillers, pH-adjusting agents, buffering substances, stabilisers, co-solvents, pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional dyestuffs,

pharmaceutically and cosmetically conventional pigments, preservatives, plasticizers, lubricants and slip additives.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the porous shaped article further comprises squalane.

Claims 21-22 (cancel)

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method according to claim 10, wherein in step (a), the porous shaped article further comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of active substances and auxiliary substances.

Claim 24 (cancel)

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent is a low-viscosity skeleton-forming agent having a viscosity of less than 2000 mPa.s measured with a one-percent-by-weight solution in distilled water at 20 °C and a pH of 6-8.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one skeleton-forming agent is a low-viscosity skeleton-forming alginate having a viscosity of less than 2000 mPa.s measured with a one-percent-by-weight solution in distilled water at 20 °C and a pH of 6-8.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the skeleton-forming agent is a sodium alginate with a calcium content of less than 3 wt.%.

Claim 28 (new): The method according to claim 25, wherein the shaped article exhibits a geometrical shape of a sphere prior to the contacting step.

Claim 29 (new): The method according to claim 26, wherein the shaped article exhibits a geometrical shape of a sphere prior to the contacting step.

Claim 30 (new): The method according to claim 1, wherein the shaped article according to step (a) exhibits a density within the range of from 0.01 g/cm^3 to 0.8 g/cm^3 and comprises:

- at least 10 wt.% of one or more skeleton-forming agents, a 1 percent-by-weight solution or suspension of which in water at 20°C and at pH 6-8 has a viscosity of less than $2000 \text{ mPa} \cdot \text{s}$, proteins being excepted,

- $0.000001 \text{ wt.}\%$ up to $50 \text{ wt.}\%$ of one or more active substances,

- $0.1 \text{ wt.}\%$ to $70 \text{ wt.}\%$ of one or more auxiliary substances, and

- up to $20 \text{ wt.}\%$ water.

Claim 31 (new): The method according to claim 30, wherein the shaped article exhibits a geometrical shape of a sphere prior to the contacting step.